

Message Text

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INFO AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JAKARTA 8359

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT,ID

SUBJECT: JAKARTA GOVERNOR ALI SADIKIN'S FAREWELL

REF: JAKARTA 8103

1. SUMMARY. JAKARTA'S 450TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS THIS WEEK HAVE TURNED INTO A GIANT FAREWELL FOR THE POPULAR, COLORFUL AND CONTROVERSIAL GOVERNOR ALI SADIKIN. PUBLIC ACCOLADES CLEARLY SIGNALLED NOT ONLY APPRECIATION FOR SADIKIN'S PAST ACHIEVEMENTS BUT ALSO INTEREST IN HIS POLITICAL FUTURE. A STUDENT PETITION NOMINATING HIM FOR PRESIDENT DREW MUCH PRESS PLAY AND A STATEMENT FROM SADIKIN THAT HE DOES NOT HAVE THE BACKING TO ASPIRE TO THIS POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. OUTGOING GOVERNOR ALI SADIKIN HAS BEEN THE CENTRAL FIGURE IN A WIDE VARIETY OF FESTIVITIES CELEBRATING JAKARTA'S 450TH ANNIVERSARY. FLOATS IN A JUNE 21 NIGHT PARADE REPORTEDLY WITNESSED BY HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS, EXTOLLED HIS ACHIEVEMENTS AND URGED HIM TO CONTINUE HIS PUBLIC SERVICE. THE LOCAL LEGISLATURE AND INNUMERABLE OTHER ORGANIZATIONS HAVE PAID HIM HOMAGE. EVEN RIOTING SOCCER FANS, WHO
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WRECKED THE CITY'S LARGEST STADIUM THIS WEEK WHEN THE VISITING SURABAYA TEAM REFUSED TO CONTINUE PLAY AFTER A REFEREE'S QUESTIONABLE CALLS, TOOK TIME OUT TO SHOUT SLOGANS URGING THE "BROTHER ALI" TO RETAINED IN OFFICE.

3. THE NATION'S TOP MAGAZINE IN A COVER STORY AND VIRTUALLY ALL JAKARTA'S PRINCIPAL NEWSPAPERS HAVE REVIEWED SADIKIN'S

TEN YEARS IN OFFICE WITH A CANDOR CHARACTERISTIC OF THE GOVERNOR HIMSELF. TYPICAL WAS AN EDITORIAL BY THE RESPECTED DAILY KOMPAS, WHICH FOUND A PARADOX IN SADIKIN'S POPULARITY WHEN HIS DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY'S BOULEVARDS, PARKS, MARKETS, AND SKYSCRAPERS HAD OFTEN BENEFITTED CAPITALISTS AT THE EXPENSE OF THE CITY'S POOR. KOMPAS CONCLUDED THAT SADIKIN'S SUCCESS WAS DUE LESS TO HIS PHYSICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS THAN TO HIS OPEN, GUILTESS STYLE "WHICH IS APPROPRIATE FOR GUIDING A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY SUCH AS JAKARTA'S."

4. KOMPAS' VIELED SUGGESTION THAT SADIKIN OFFERED INDONESIANS AN ALTERNATIVE STYLE OF LEADERSHIP WAS MADE EXPLICIT BY A PETITION LAUNCHED BY FORMER UNIVERSITY OF INDONESIA STUDENT COUNCIL CHAIRMAN DIPO ALAM, ASKING THE PEOPLE CONSULTATIVE ASSEMBLY TO ELECT SADIKIN PRESIDENT OR VICE-PRESIDENT IN 1978. WHILE REFREFRAINING FROM ENDORSING THE PETITION, THE CURRENT UI COUNCIL CHAIRMAN PRAISED DIPO ALAM'S EFFORT TO STIMULATE POLITICAL ACTION "FROM BELOW," WHICH HE SAID WAS NOTABLY ABSENT IN THE SELECTION OF SADIKIN'S REPLACEMENT. A DEVELOPMENT UNION PARTY LEADER ALSO ENDORSED DIPO ALAM'S "POLITICS FROM BELOW." FOR HIS PART, SADIKIN SAID THE STUDENT INITIATIVE DEMONSTRATED THAT INDONESIA'S WAS A DEMOCRATIC STATE AND WOULD GIVE A LEASON TO "THE OUGOIN GENERATION INFLUENCED BY FEAR AND FEUDALISM." IN RESPONSE TO PRESS QUERIES, HOWVEER, HE CLAIMED HE HAD NEITHER THE AMBITION MOR THE BACKING TO BECOME PRESIDENT.
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5. COMMENT: WHILE SAKIKIN'S EITHNIC GROUP (SUNDANESE) AND MILITARY SERVICE (MARINES) WEIGHT HEAVILY AGAINST HIM IN THE CURRENT POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT, THIS LATEST DEMONSTRATION OF HIS POPULARITY WILL UNDOUBTEDLY REINFORCE SUHARTO'S FEELING THAT SADIKIN IS POTENTIALLY HIS MOST SERIOUS RIVAL. IT SEEMS DOUBTFUL, THEREFORE, THAT SADIKIN WILL BE GIVEN A GOVERNMENT POSITION IN WHICH HE CAN FULLY EMPLOY HIS MANAGERIAL AND CHARISMATIC TALENTS.

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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